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"THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS."

The Apostle, in writing to his Jewish brethren, scattered abroad, regarding some of the obligations that rested upon them, especially with reference to their partial failures in their spiritual progress, and their "dullness of hearing," said, "when for the time, you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again, what be the principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk—not meat," Heb. 5: 11, 12. A more literal reading of the passage, would be, "You have need, that one teach you again, the *Elements*, (*τα στοιχεῖα*) of God's teachings." When we properly consider the value of elementary instruction, in every department of the labor of life, we can scarcely place an adequate estimate upon the importance of the first lessons in religion. Indeed, without starting right, without learning correctly, the first, second, third, and the various con-

secutive steps in the science of the Christian institution, we can scarcely hope for correct practical results. In our previous issues we labored to show that, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin, and hence, that not a single act of acceptable obedience can be performed in the absence of faith in God, and in his Son our Lord Jesus Christ. It also, seems to us clear that, such alone, as believe, can repent of their sins, and place themselves in position for pardon. The third step, in the order of Paul's elementary teaching is

THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS.

While we regard it necessary for historical effect, to notice the main points in the scriptures, regarding the various baptisms, we can promise little more at present than a connected statement on the subject. We will endeavor, to at least, observe order.

I—THE BAPTISM OF JOHN—WHENCE? AND WHAT?

It is recorded—"In those days came John the baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. There, went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins," Mat. 5: 1-6. The question might be asked, why do we find no introduction to John's baptism? There is no commission, "Go and baptize the Jews," or go and cleanse the people; and no qualification given with reference to the character of the administrator, and but little in regard to the persons to be baptized.

The history, in the New Testament, is so meagre, that we can but conclude, there was much understood by John and the people, to whom he preached, not written at least in our scriptures. The thoughtful reader, will find some explanation in the history of the Jews, and some valuable sketches, in the annals of other nations. In most of the nations of earth, it had been the custom of the people, when about to engage in any presumed sacred service, to undergo a purifying, always including a washing, or rather a bathing in water. In the consecration or "*filling the hands*" of

Levites, for the work of priests under the law, the candidates were to purify themselves seven days, before entering on their charge, Ex. 29: 35, Ez. 43: 26. Moses was commanded to bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and *wash* them in water, Ex. 29: 4: 40: 12. Lev. 8: 6. Even the impurities, which arose among the Jews in their wars were of such a character that, the soldiers, and what was captured, had to be purified. The law enacted for this kind of a purification, reads, "Every thing that may abide the fire, shall go through the fire, and all that abideth not the fire, shall go through the water." Nu. 31: 23. Hence, the purifications, under the law, prepared the people for John's baptism. John was leader of no sect, and no builder of a party. He was not even *a* baptist, in any sense that would imply there were others, but he was simply, John the baptizer, as the word indicates. His commission was from God.

THE PURPOSE OF JOHN'S BAPTISM.

It will be remembered that, John's work, was all preparatory. The angel said to his father Zacharias, "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and many of the children of Israel, shall he turn to the Lord their God. He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. He shall make ready a people prepared for the Lord." It was said again, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins."

It was said by another that, "John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,and there went out to him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Mar. 1: 4, 5.

What, was the character of this preparatory work? In the erection of the house of God by Solomen, 1004 years before Christ, the materials were all made ready according to rule, before they were collected together on Mount Zion. Learned and wise men, in distant sections, had been employed, to prepare,

wood and stone, and when all things were ready, the house was "built, so that there was neither, hammer nor axe, or any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was building," 1st Ki. 6: 7. We presume, no one acquainted with God's dealings with the people, will doubt for a moment, that the preparation of materials, and erection of Solomon's temple, pre-figured the work for the temple of God under his Son. John was sent to "make the crooked ways straight, the rough ways smooth," and to get ready materials for the new and better edifice.

Our Lord Jesus Christ and his disciples, also practised the preparatory baptism, till Pentecost, when the spirit was sent, to give other directions. While we have called it John's baptism, it was as much Christ's baptism as his. The Savior at least ratified it, by submitting to it, and afterwards authorized its practice, in getting ready a people for the spiritual house. It is a perplexing question with some, to determine, if this preparatory baptism was sufficient for all who had submitted, in order to become members of the church of Christ.

There were twelve baptized by Apollos at Ephesus, in very great ignorance of the character of the work and mission of John over twenty years after his death, and after the commission had gone forth to baptize in the name of Christ, and therefore, their baptism was not obedience to John or the Savior. Of course, when they heard Paul preach the Gospel, as honest persons, they could see no alternative, but to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have noticed, that John was to prepare a people, made ready for the Lord, or to qualify them to be built into the temple made without hands. John gave them "the knowlenge of salvation by the remission of their sins." They were therefore "baptized with the baptism of repentence, in order to the remission of sins," In consequence of this preparation by John, it is written, "He came to his own"—to the people prepared—"and his own received him not," that is, not all of them, "but to as many as received him, he gave power (authority) to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1: 12,13. John preached that, they should believe on him, who was to come; and doubtless, all who submitted to the "baptism of reformation in order to remission of their sins" were not only pardoned, but were said to be "born of God"—were qualified for

taking position in the new building, and were, in all respects just such as the Savior recognized as "lively stones" in the edifice But John, before he suffered, said of his Lord, "He must in crease, but I must decrease." In this state of mind, he closed his mission.

2—THE BAPTISM OF SUFFERING.

When Salome, the wife of the Galilean fisherman, and mother of James, the Great, and John his brother, requested, that the Lord in his new kingdom, should permit her two sons to sit the one on his right hand, and the other on his left hand, he said to her, "You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They said unto him, we are able." He replied to them, "You shall drink indeed, of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father," Mat. 20: 21-23. Hence, "The baptism of suffering," was the extreme agony which the Lord endured in his shameful treatment from the Jews, and especially in his death on the cross. The word baptism, of course, is metaphorically employed, to denote the overwhelming and deep sorrow of the son of God.

3—THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

John, the Baptizer said, "I indeed baptize you in water, in order to reformation, but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I—he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Mat." 3: 11, 12.

The discriminating reader, must see that, the Lord in the passage, was addressing two classes of Jews—the obedient and the disobedient, and that, two baptisms were to be administered—one

by spirit, and the other, by fire. When the Savior addressed the disciples alone, he intimated no baptism of fire upon them, but said, "You shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit, not many days hence." Ac. 1: 5. This baptism was the promise of our Lord to his sorrowing disciples after he should leave them. When on the Mount, and about to depart, he said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Lu. 24: 49, and ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." Ac. 1: 8, 9.

In a former number, we showed that, anterior to the day of Pentecost, the Apostles cast out devils, healed the sick, and did many wonderful works, through the words of Christ, but the spirit was not given till after the ascension. The Lord said, "If I go not away, the Advocate will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter (Advocate, or Teacher) that he may abide with you forever."

It should be carefully noted, that the spirit was not promised, as a *power* to convert the people by physical contact, or as a *substance* in the heart or body to make the recipients feel happy. He was to be sent as the Great Teacher in the place of the Lord, who was going away. Hence, the Savior said, the "Holy Spirit, whom the world cannot receive, and whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14: 17-26. The main question, however, in this connection, is to ascertain the exact idea of the baptism of the spirit. When and where was the prediction fulfilled. God had promised to "Pour out his spirit, upon all flesh." This we understand, was a promise both to Jews and Gentiles. There can be no serious controversy, as to the fact, that the spirit, as had been promised, first, descended at Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the ascension of the Savior to heaven. This was the first baptism of the spirit. Hence, Luke's record is, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there

appeared to them cloven tongues like as fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance." Ac. 2: 1-4. Thus we see that, the spirit was not only poured out from heaven, but the "*filling*" of the disciples by the spirit, verifies the promise, that they "should be baptized by the Holy Spirit not many days hence." It would be tedious to detail all the consequences of the out-pouring of the spirit. By the "filling" of the disciples with the spirit, they were enabled to speak as the spirit gave them utterance. It is enough to repeat, with regard to the baptism of the spirit on Pentecost, that it was the first occurrence; and while it was "received" also, by the Samaritan converts, it is not called the baptism of the spirit; and it would be unwise to engage to prove the subsequent blessings by the spirit, constituted, or should be called, the baptism of the spirit. The reception of the spirit by the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, is recognized by Luke as the baptism of the spirit. Peter was sent to "speak words" whereby the Gentiles should be saved, and he reported to his brethren at Jerusalem, "As I beban to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them (the Gentiles) as on us (Jews) at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Ac. 11: 16.

We see plainly, that the spirit to the Gentiles is also called the baptism of the spirit. It is a question, possibly, of some importance to determine, if the prophecy in reference to the descent of the spirit upon "all flesh" was not fulfilled, when it was sent to the Jews on Pentecost and to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius. We are fully aware, that spiritual gifts abounded in the churches, till the death of John, or till the full completion of the revelations for the direction of the saints in all times; but whether the gifts to perform miracles, were really the baptism of the spirit, we think, no one can satisfactorily determine. To be sure, they were to speak with tongues, and prophecy, when baptized by the spirit. But whether this baptism, can be predicated of any except the Jews on Pentecost, and to the Gentiles seven years subsequently, at the house of Cornelius, remains to be proved. The coming of the spirit, seems to be so intimately connected with the baptism that we have not been in the habit of calling the subsequent gifts in the churches the baptism of the spirit. Yet, we would not, willingly enter into any controversy on the subject. The spirit, was sent from heaven,

filled the disciples, and the reception was the baptism of the spirit, first on Pentecost. The spirit, "fell" again, on the house of Cornelius, upon persons, who had not heard the words of salvation—were not of the Lord's household, and the specific purpose was not to pardon, or save the recipients, but rather to convince the Jews, that God was willing also to save the Gentiles. Still, it was the baptism of the spirit. Hence, we repeat, that the descent of the spirit upon the Jews and Gentiles, was the baptism promised, and yet there is at least doubt, whether the subsequent miraculous gifts amongst the saints, should be called the baptism of the spirit. The spirit came to remain—to lead the disciples into all truth, so long as needed, and then, to dwell in the saints, as an earnest of God's faithfulness to the end. When Paul extended his hands to the Ephesian converts, "The Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Ac. 19: 6. No miraculous power, or gift, after the descent upon Cornelius, however, was called baptism. With these things before us, we could not infer that, any one since the days of the Apostles, has been, or is the subject of spiritual baptism. The spirit descended and "*abides*" with the saints. It is the rightful inheritance of all who enter the body of Christ, and by the truth, is our witness that we are heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ.

4TH—THE BAPTISM OF FIRE.

Was it a promised blessing, or a threatened curse for disobedience?

We have often heard long and loud prayers, for the baptism of fire, but if we read aright, it was to be sent as a punishment upon the disobedient. Sad would be the disappointment, were such petitions answered, as offered. Let us look at the scriptures again on the subject. John said to the Jews—good and otherwise, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire." But in order to show, who were to be baptized by the spirit, and who by fire, he added: "His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat, (the good) into his garner, but he will burn up the chaff, (the wicked) with unquenchable fire." "The axe is laid to the root of the trees; therefore,

every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." The obedient, were to be taken, as good wheat, into the garner, but the unfaithful, the chaff, or wicked, were to be cast into the consuming flames. Again, it is written, "The son of man, shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom, all things that offend, and them who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Mat. 13: 41-43. The disobedient Jews, have been for eighteen hundred years, in a furnace of fire, wailing and gnashing their teeth," and so will they, while in disobedience, remain in torment.

The prophet said: "The day cometh that, shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh, shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they rhall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4: 1-3. The overthrow of the rebellious Jews, in consequence of their persistent blindness and wickedness, has resulted in the punishment of the threatened destruction by fire. They are still in the furnace as chaff, suffering the baptism in the flames, whether they are aware of it, or not.

5TH—THE BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF CHRIST.

Practically considered, this is the "*one baptism*" mentioned by Paul, in which the inhabitants of earth are most deeply interested.

It is the baptism under the great commission: "Go teach—disciple—the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy spirit." "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned."

This, by some, is called "Christian baptism," but it is not thus denominated in the New testament, neither is it enjoined upon christians, but upon such, as desire to come under the yoke of

Christ. We consider it incumbent upon us, to give the subject at least a systematic statement.

I—THE ACTION OF BAPTISM.

There is no dispute amongst scholars, as to the word *Βαπτιξω*, signifying to *dip*, *plunge* or *immerse*. Prof. Moses Stewart of Andover said, "All lexicographers and critics of any note, are agreed in this." See his treatise on baptism. p. 14th.

Calvin said, "The word *baptize*, signifies to immerse, and the right of immersion, was practised by the ancient church." Inst. c. 4, § 15.

Luther employs words quite as pointed, and we have found no scholarly writer, who presumes to say that, the word has a different signification.

Why, then, we are gravely asked, did Luther, Calvin, Steuart and other scholars defend the validity of other actions, as *spriukle* and *pour*, for baptism? The sole ground for any other action, rests upon the presumed right of the church, to *change* the form of obedience revealed by the Savior. Steuart asks. "*Will nothing but the letter do?*" and affirms that, what he calls "Externals, have always been, modified by time and place, and they always will be." p. 89. If men have the right to change the forms given, we can but presume they have also the right to abrogate ordinances, or substitute others in their place.

This is the only question to determine, so far as the action is concerned. We use not the form, the, "Mode of baptism." This would imply that, there are various modes of immersing; or different modes of *sprinkling* or *pouring*. These words denote specific actions, and to speak of the mode of dipping, sprinkling or pouring, is quite too puerile for people of ordinary understanding.

The Lord, however, seems to have so hedged his ordinances, as to place it beyond the skill of men to entirely conceal their import. Hence Paul, speaks of the action of baptism, as a *burial* and *rising*, to walk, in newness of life. All metatropical applications of the word, as scholars deny not, must be understood by the letter, or root signification.

If baptism is not defined in the Bible, we think it would be difficult for even a scholar to say, "I *know*, that the Bible teaches any fact," If we *know* the scriptures teach, that the mother of our Savior, was the Virgin Mary, we can affirm with equal certainty the meaning of the Greek verb to baptize.

2—THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Our Lord commissioned his disciples, to teach first, and then baptize the tought, to preach the Gospel, and baptize the believers. If this is not the doctrine of the New testament, as to the characters of persons to be baptized, then, we find nothing certain on the subject of the christian religion. It is no opinion with us that, it is said, "The spirit was pourd out on Pentecost;" and we are just as certain that it was said to the people who inquired, "What shall we do," that it is written, "Repent and each of you be baptized." Hence, we conclude, that there is positive certainty, the scriptures authorize believers to be baptized.

3—THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM.

As we have quoted, the promise of salvation was to all who, should believe and be baptized. In explaining "The repentance and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem, Peter said, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins."

Saul was told to "Arise, and be baptized and wash away his sins."

We have shown that, by faith the heart is changed, or brought to a full sense of responsibility; by repentance the habits of life, are corrected; and now, we are prepared to say, that God has given baptism as *the* act, by which believing penitents "put off the old man with his deeds" and "put on Christ." It is not a cleansing of the flesh, as Peter informs us, but it is the "Obedience of faith" or the "Seeking of a good conscience," through the resurection of Christ.

Paul assures us, that "We are buried whith Christ into death;

that like as he was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so, we also, should walk in newness of life." If asked, we could offer no explanation to these plain passages of scripture. Such and such only, as believe the word of God, are able to receive these things.

Are we told that, there are other conditions revealed for the acceptance of penitents? We must reject the terms, we have submitted, before it will be possible, to accept others. Furthermore, if there is another way, then, what we have designated as the terms, cannot be true. If our contemporaries, are pardoned, without submission to the Gospel; in revivals, then there is no value in "*The obedience* of faith." We offer no reply, to imaginary objections. Persons, who feel their full responsibilities to God, will scarcely hesitate to search the scriptures, with the view of ascertaining, if these things are true.

We conclude in the words of the inspired Paul, "God be thanked that, though you were the servants of sin, you have obeyed from the heart, that form of doctrine, which was delivered to you Being then, made free from sin, you become the servants of righteousness." [Ro. 6: 17. 18.]

Happy are they who receive the word of God, in the love of it.

THE GIFT, AND AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE NEW BIRTH.

Our highly esteemed Brother, Judge James E. Rice, of Clarksville, Tenn., has submitted the following for examination:

Dear Bro. Fanning:

I wish to ask you in regard to the passage of Scripture, "*And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,*"—Is the promise extended to all penitent believers, who should thereafter be baptized? Or do you understand, that the gift of the "Holy Ghost" was the power to perform miracles, heal the sick, cast out demons and speak with tongues, and was limited to those who should believe and obey the gospel while the Apostles lived, and until there was no further necessity for miracles? Does the

Holy Spirit dwell in us in any other way than in the words spoken by the Holy Spirit? Do you understand the Savior taught Nicodemus, that the Holy Spirit would have any other agency in men's conversion than by words, written or spoken, to enlighten the mind and touch, or quicken the heart, by the production of motives which should be sufficient to lead men to obey the gospel? The Savior said to Nicodemus, "except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Did he intend to say that, "in the new institution which I will establish after my death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit will be sent into the world to enlighten the world—that is, to reprove the world of sin, of rightousness and of judgment—and by presenting through the Apostles, the faets of the gospel, lead men to embrace and obey the truth and having been begotten, or convinced by the words of the Holy Spirit, either written or spoken, they would pass into the kingdom of God—the act of baptism would be the medium through which men, who had been begotten by the Spirit, must pass into that new state called the kingdom of God."

Many brethren, it seems to me, appropria'e scriptures to themselves, which only applied to the Apostles and to those who should become believers in their day—while God was with them working signs and miracles to convince men of the truth of the gospel. Some claim that the Holy Spirit is promised to all believers as a comforter—and that he dwells in them, and enlightens and strengthens and comforts them, independently of the word—that is, that the spirit dwells in us in such a manner, as to be recognized by our spirits, or minds—and that thus dwelling in us he so impresses our spirits without words, as to produce impressions and thoughts that we could not have, but for such direct contact of the Holy Spirit with our spirits. If there is any authority for such a position I will thank you most kindly to point it out to me, for I am exceedingly anxious to know the truth as it is in Jesns.

I remain Fraternally yours in Christ,

JAS. E. RICE.

REPLY.

Brother Rice:

With the very strong conviction, that your questions in reference to the "Gift of the Holy Spirit" and the spirits agency in

ew birth, are well calculated to excite interest in students of the Bible, we send them forth to our readers, with the hope, that many earnest persons may be led to examine in the light of the Bible, at least, all the practical bearings, of the matters embraced.

There are at least, two important questions involved, in examining the phrase, "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." We should ascertain

1*st. To whom the promise was made?*

2*d. The meaning of the words, "Gift of the Holy Spirit."*

As we need, neither logic nor rhetoric, in determining facts, we open the Bible at the prophecy of Joel—Chapter 2. 28. "I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions, and also, upon the servants and hand maids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit." We plainly see, that the promise of the spirit was first, to the Jews, male and female, the old and the young; and secondly, to "all flesh"—to the Gentiles, and to all nations. We see quite as clearly, that the pouring out of the spirit was *miraculous*, and the influences upon the people, to whom the promise was made, were likewise *miraculous*. The announcement, was that through the spirit, the recipients were to "*prophesy*" "see visions," etc., etc.

The Apostles were first the subjects of the miraculous displays of the spirit; and secondly, the same promise was to "all that were afar off, to all, the called," A. 2, 59. There is no question, as to the miraculous gifts of the spirit to all the saved—in all the churches, to the completion of the perfect revelation, with John the "Beloved disciple." Peter said, "God has exalted, with his right hand, his son, as a Prince and Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so, is also, the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him," Ac. 5, 32. All the obedient, received the spirit, to testify, or bear witness, in miraculous words, and ways, that Jesus Christ was the Savior promised; and that their sins were pardoned in obedience. Paul says, "The Holy Spirit, witnesseth in every city, *saying*, that bonds and afflictions abide me," Ac. 20, 23. To christians, he said, "The Holy Spirit, itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Ro. 8, 16. The correct reading is, that the "Holy Spirit bears witness to our spirit," but not, with the idea, as some have fancied, that our spirit bears wtiness, and the Holy Spirit in

some unintelligible manner, bears witness *with* it. God's spirit, always testifies, as other credible witnesses, by furnishing the evidence in words, thoughts, ideas, which are conclusive of the facts, that sins were pardoned, and the subjects, were constituted sons and daughters of the Almighty by adoption.

Again, Paul declares, "The Holy Spirit is a witness to us," for after that he had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them. And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." He. 10: 15-17. The spirit, bears witness to the saved, according to Paul, by the laws *written*, in the hearts.

These scriptures exhaust the subject of the spirit's witness, or the testimony as to the divine heirship of the saints. The spirit bears witness, through the truth, written in the hearts of the people, and in no other manner.

We can see no objection to calling, the witness of spirit, through words given,—put into the mind, and written upon the hearts of the people, *miraculous*. The next question, is to determine, if this miraculous work of putting the law into the hearts of the saints, differs materially from the laws written with the finger of God, in the book called the New Covenant, and received into honest and understanding hearts at this day, as evidence that we are heirs of God and joint heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ. To be sure, according to the promise, the miracles ceased at the close of the testimony, but we have all that the spirit furnished, and our salvation is as fully assured, as was the salvation of obedient believers, into whose hearts the laws were first miraculously put. If we receive the law, it is as fully written on our hearts, as it was on the hearts of the ancient christians. We may very easily understand the fact as it is written, that the "*spirit was ministered*," in the days of miracles, "*by the hearing of faith*," Gal. 3, 2-5. We still have the identical words, through which the spirit bore witness in the first century, and was "*ministered*" to the people of God, and we can see no good reason, why we are not fully authorized to say, God's spirit bears testimony to our hearts, that we are pardoned, adopted and saved through the "faith, once for all, delivered to the saints." The converts, as we think we have shown, made by the preaching of the Gospel, from Pentecost, till about the close of the first century,—till, at least, the testimony was sealed up, and all came to the unity of the faith—in entering the

spiritual body, were first entitled, to the "spirit of adoption," by which they could "cry, Abba, Father," "because, they were sons, God sent forth the spirit of his son into their hearts," Gal. 4: 6. This, doubtless, is the "*measure of the spirit*," still enjoyed by all the saints. But in the second place, the same converts, who enjoyed the "first fruits of the spirit," or "received the spirit of adoption," had in addition, that "Gift of the Holy Spirit," promised on Penetcost, by which, they spoke with tongues, prophesied, and were supernaturally led into the truth. This supernatural grace, ceased when the new order was completed—when all that was necessary for life and godliness, had been given. Hence, from the close of the first century to the present, no one has received "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the extraordinary influences promised by God and experienced in all the churches, in the first age, and particularly, on Pentecost. We now walk, by the *ordinary* influences of the spirit, through what is written in the New Testament.

But, dear Brother, in reference to the

"DIRECT AND INDEPENDENT ACTION OF THE SPIRIT,"

you ask,

"If the spirit comforts, enlightens, strengthens, independently of the words of the spirit?"

We have no instance in scripture, of the direct conversion of the spirit, by physical eontact, and not an example of the witness of the spirit, or ministration of the spirit, can be found, but in, and through the words of the good spirit.

Again. "Does the spirit dwell in us in such a manner, as to be recognized by our spirits, or minds and that, thus dwelling in us, he so operates upon our spirits without words, as to produce impressions and thoughts, we could not have, but for such direct contact of the Holy Spirit with our spirit?" This, of all others, is the most important question in regard to the action of the spirit. Quakers and Shakers, without hesitation, declare that they have direct revelations, recognized by feeling, and undoubted assurance that the spirit dwells in their hearts. In all the revivals of our Protestent denominations, converts are required to say that, "they have direct witness of the spirit, by feeling, and that

their sins, they *know* demonstrably, are forgiven." A conclu based upon feeling is very difficult to answer. If a single soul, however, now living, has direct spiritual evidence that he is a christian, millions more under the identical teaching, are equally entitled to credit; and hence, we would be compelled to admit the truth of direct spiritual light in the hearts of all the contradictory partisans of the age. If we admit the truth, of direct revelation of the spirit, by *feeling* in one case, of course, we must admit the truth of all, who seem to be honest in their profession, including not only tne more respectable Protestant sects, ut also, Shakers, Quakers, Sweedenborgians, Mormons, modern Spiritualists, and many open Infidels, who claim to be under direct spirit, or demoniacal guidance. There is scarcely a hairs breadth between special revelations to each seeker, and the *direct* knowing of the Gnostics, the *a priori* of Logicians and the spontaneous conciousness of psyhologists. While the notion is more widely spread and popular than most other errors, we consider it, at once, the most insinuating, and yet deceitful and dangerous delusion of the age In most sections of the earth, thousands readily profess confidence in direct revelations where one can be found who really believes the Bible. Yet, we mus regard the system as most *fleshly*, never spiritual or purifying and elevating in its influences. God acts directly on the sturdy oak of the forest, by his lightning, and he leads the ox by his "*instincts;*" but man, who is pre-eminently the "Image and glory of God," the Divine Father directs by his Good Spirit, in words addressed to his *understanding heart.* That something within, called mind, intelligence, spirit, or soul, which distinguishes man from the brute, God has greatly honored, in the human family, by enlightening and purifying through spiritual words. Hence, we re, eat, that without words, God's spirit never made a revelation, bore witness or impressed a single soul.

In reference to the inquiries, touching the Spirit's agency in the new birth, we have space but for few words at present.

The error, of an instantaneous "*change of the heart and nature*," by a direct and immediate physical contact, as the wind, upon the oak, is we repeat, the most gross and fatal delusion of the age. No one who looks for physical power to correct error, is prepared to *believe*, any proposition, whatever. All under its blighting influence indeed, are seeking *demonstration*, in what they call their "religious experience," and nothing short of direct revelations in their animal feelings, will satisfy them.

In the spiritual government of the world, God operates through the understanding heart, the intelligence and spirit, by which man is pre-eminently distinguished from the brute creation. Hence, the Apostle plainly teaches, that the "spirit is received by the hearing of faith" and not, by the works of the law, or by miraculous contact with the fleshly nature of man. The "ministration of the spirit, by the hearing of faith" is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in words of love, addressed to the understanding. Consequently, wherever the Gospel is preached, understood and obeyed, the people are under spiritual guidance and influence. Others are under the dominion of the Prince of this world, and whether they are conscious of it, or not, they remain shut up in the gross darkness of the world, under the direction of the flesh and animal impulses.

Hence, we conclude, that in nations and communities, where the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, is not heard, and received into honest and believing hearts, there is no spiritual influence, and no power of God operating upon the souls of the people. David said, "the entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the prudent, and through thy precepts, I get understanding, therefore, I hate every false way."

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

BY REV. W. K. PENDLETON.

In The *Christian Standard* of March 7th, 1874, under the caption of "Elders not officers." Brother Pendleton has published a review, of our first article upon the subject of church officers, to which it becomes our duty, if possible, to present a comprehensive reply

We promise, at least, fairness in the statement of our Brother's propositions, and candor in our responses. We also, suggest that, in our view of the magnitude of the questions under examination, there is much more involved, than many good brethren

and friends, seem to apprehend. There are, however, various matters in our brothers remarks, such as, "Bro. Fanning, wrote in haste"—"without due consideration"—"his article is not a reply"—"he takes high ground, and the prospect is sad"—"misrepresents"—"his conclusions are new," etc., etc., which it would be difficult, if not impracticable to answer. Time alone must determine the validity of our brothers conjectures. Our ambition, is to direct attention mainly, to the questions of practical interest in our brother's review.

1st. In regard to church organization, Brother P. says: "We have patiently examined it, and re-examined it, time and again, during a period of over thirty years, and we have very little expectation that Brother Fanning, or any body else, can say any thing on the subject at all worthy of consideration, that we have not heard and thought of, considered and analyzed, and brought to the test of the scriptures and church history and credited with its due weight and significance in the argument."

We accord to our brother all honesty of purpose, and can but believe, he has long been a diligent and successful student of the scriptures, but when we find others of possibly, equal ability and as earnest students of the Bible, who have arrived at different conclusions, we can but distrust this character of evidence in an important investigation of Divine truth.

2d. Brother Pendleton insists that, we should answer his Greek criticism, in which he assumes that, *καταστησης* should be rendered, "*made* or *appointed* elders." We doubt not, he and others have so long read the passage, with this notion, that they really think it teaches, Titus was left in Crete to "*make*" or "*appoint*" elders or officers. Scholars agree that the word means, literally, to *place*, and we insist, that no opposite meaning can be given to it. In Mat. 24: 47, it is rendered, "He shall be made ruler," but our brother must see that, in this instance, it is equivalent to "he shall be *set* or *placed* ruler. In Heb. 2: 7, it is translated "Thou, *didst set* him over the works of thy hands." Should our brother show, in a single instance, that the word *elder*, denotes *officer*, we may favor the notion, that Titus *made* elders. Our brother James Lillie, whose Greek scholarship is, perhaps, inferior to no other critic on the continent, on 47th page of his able work on "Bishops and Councils," says, "Elders obtained their honor, by *established character*," and if so, they were not made by any process of ordination, or appointment. But all the supposed arguments,

we repeat, in reference to *making* elders, can have no significance whatever, till it is clearly shown, they are officers.

3d. Brother P. says, "I have showed that the word *Presbuteros* (elder) occurs *thirty-one* times in the New Testament, before it is ever used in connection, with the Christian church, and that, in every case, except three, it is unquestionably, used in an official sense."

If correct in this sweeping statement, our examination should close. If our brother will show that, in a single one of the occurrences, the word elder signifies an officer, we will cheerfully submit, and humbly confess our error. His admission seems fatal to the truth of his assertion. In three of the occurrences, he says it denotes, not officer. But should he not give us one passage in which there can be no doubt, it denotes officer? Has he done it? Our readers, who are not very familiar with the use of the word, may derive profit, from a notice of a few of its occurrances, on which our brother so implicity relies.

We find first, "Tradition of the elders," Mat. 15: 2. What is the proof these elders were officers? Again, we have "elders of the people," four times, "elders of the Jews" and "elders of Isarel," but we see no evidence, they were officers. We have again, "scribes and elders," "priests and elders, "rulers of the people and elders," but we can find nothing to imply that, their being elders—necessarily proved them officers. In the three exceptions, of our brother, "*elder son*" "beginning at the *eldest*" and "*old men*," Ac. 2: 17, we discover the plain meaning of *elder*. Even Prof. McGarvey, in his work on the Eldership, admits that Etymologically, the word elder, from *Presbuteros*, denotes "*older*" but still he maintains that, *technically*, it means something quite different.

In reply to our remark, that, "If officer is connoted in a single occurrence of *Presbuteros*, it is in all," brother Pendleton asks, "Who is so obtuse as not to see there is no such a law of language? It is equivalent to saying, a word cannot be used, but in one sense—and when thus translated out of its scholastic terminology, the argument needs no formal refutation." Our Brother Pendleton will doubtless not be offended, when we frankly admit our "*obtusity*." We know no such rules of language as he and Brother McGarvey, employ, to make *Presbuteros*, mean *elder*, in one instance, and officer, in another. Alexander Campbell did some good service, in showing the brethren, that if *dip* is in *bap-*

tizo, it can not get out of it, and if it is not in sprinkle, there is no rule of language, to put it there.

Ernesti taught that, "The sense of a word, can not be *diverse* or *multifarious*;" and that, "To every word in the scriptures, there is unquestionably, assigned some idea, or notion; otherwise, words are useless, and have no more significance, than the inarticulate sounds of animals."

We are sorry to hear our leading brethren, assuming the right to change the meaning of words from their literal sense, as it seems to us, to establish their new opinions. If *Presbuteros*, in any instance, denotes *elder*, we cannot accept substituted and new meanings. Tropical uses of words, must always be limited by the literal.

4th. Brother Pendleton, asks us to answer his Hebrew argument. He tells us, that, *Zah-kehn*, the word for Elder, in Hebrew, "is used in its strict Jewish political sense, for a magistrate of the people. Gesenius, the great Hebrew lexicographer, says the word was used by the Jews in the "sense of magistrate, the notion of age, being neglected." "Any one," says Bro. P. "who doubts this, will please consult Ex. 111. 16, IV: 29, Deu. 19: 12, 21: 3, 4, 6 and 22: 16, and if he is not satisfied the word means a civil officer, we despair of satisfying him of any thing."

Our brother, will please allow us to say in all kindness, that while we could readily admit that, an elder, might have been a magistrate amongst the Jews, we doubt, whether we shall ever believe, that elder, meant squire or magistrate. It would be quite as easy to prove that magistrate means elder; or that Paul, denotes deacon. Yet, he was an "able deacon" Perhaps, it might not be amiss, to notice what Gesenius further writes in reference to the word. He says, *Zah-kehn*, means *old, aged*, an *old man, older than some, elder* than he, *elders* of Israel, of the city, of Egypt, the chief men, magistrates, the notion of age being neglected. (Who gave Gesenius or Bro. P. this information?) Ex. 3: 16, 4: 29, Deu. 19: 12, 21: 3, 4, 6, 22: 14, 17, 18. The Arabac, *Sheich*, old man, chief of the tribe. Italian, *Signor*, French, *Signeur*, Spanish, *Senor*, English, *Sir;* all from the Latin *Senior*, elder, as the German, *graw, growo, grey-headed.* Respect towards old age in China, leads persons of like rank, to address each other by the term, *my elder brother.* [Is. 47: 6.] Plu, fem. *old women.*" So spake the great Lexicographer. Perhaps, it would be well, to

notice some of the passages, in which the word is supposed to mean magistrate, without reference to the qualification of age. Take for example, Ex. 4: 29, Moses and Aaron gathered the elders of the children of Israel." This is one of Brother P.'s strong passages, showing a man who cannot be convinced by it, that "*elder denotes civil officer*, he despairs of satisfying him of any thing." It strikes us that, one must be looking very earnestly for a *civil officer*, before he can see him in a single passage cited. Macbeth saw the ghost of Duncan, when others could not. The word *Zah-kehn*, occurs in our Hebrew Bible 167 times; old, 14 times; old man, 19; old men, 6; eldest, 1; the old, 1; elder, 1; ancient men, 1; aged, 3; senators, 1; ancient, 4; ancients, 10; ancient men, 1; and elders, 105; and not in a single passage, can we discover officer, squire, magistrate, or even ruler. Our brother, we hope, will not reproach us for our "*obtusity*." If we were very intently looking for *officer*, perhaps, we might see it.

DEFINITION OF OFFICER.

5th. Brother P. says, "An officer, is one specially, and authoritatively invested with office. Being specified, he is distinguished from non-officials, though they may be of equal, or superior age, merit or fitness; being authorized, he acts representatively, by warrant of a commission, and not of his own choice, or will; and being invested with office, he has laid upon him, some definite work, or service, for the faithful performance of which he is responsible to those who appointed him. It is in this sense, that I affirm the elders of the Christian church to be officers. There are many ways of appointing officers; the authority may also be very diverse. It follows, therefore, that, in order to maintain my position that "elders are officers," it is not necessary to prove that, they are self-perpetuating, nor that they are invested with the keys, nor that they have power to forgive, or retain sins, nor to open and shut the kingdom."

While we are pleased to hear Bro. P.'s statement, we fear it does not sufficiently fence the subject, to amount to a very clear definition. When Bro. P. tells us, who makes officers, and defines their powers, we can judge better as to his meaning Whately says: "Definition, literally, signifies, laying down a boun-

dary, and is used in logic to signify, an expression which explains any term, so as to separate it from every thing else, as a boundary separates fields." John Stuart Mill, says: "A definition to be complete, should unfold the whole of what is involved in the meaning of the word defined." He adds, "having stated the true idea of definition, we proceed to examine some popular and conflicting conceptions of the above." Amongst the unscientific and imperfect definitions, he places an imaginary definition which embraces, "not the whole, and some times, not even any part, of what the word connotes." This, in our seeing, is precisely what Bro. McGarvey, did, in defining *elder*, Etymologically, "*older*," and *technically*, *officer*; and it seems nothing more nor less than what Bro. Pendleton has done in getting, magistrate and officer, from the Hebrew *Zah-kehn*, when neither idea is connoted by it, or contained in it. This too, is the exact logic of the famous J. Ditzler, in getting *immerse*, out of baptizo, by "taking on some other meaning," till there is not a vestige of burial or resurrection in it. Brother Pendleton's statement, that an "officer is one vested with office," approximates not a definition. Unless *office*, defines, fences in, gives a boundary, or explains, the word officer, it can be no definition of it. Neither does, "being distinguished from non-officials," give the meaning of official. Perhaps, the nearest approach to a definition is in the clause "an officer is one who acts by warrant of a commission." To expedite the examination, our brother will permit us to lend a little aid, in definitions. The word *office*, is from the Latin *ob*, and *facere*, to act, and denotes invested authority from which, one acts for, or obeys the will of another. In Canon law, officer often denotes, "benefice, without jurisdiction." Hence, the origin of "sinecure," which denotes, one with *benefice*, or authority, without a *cure*, or work to perform.

We can quite readily see, how Gen. Grant was vested with his presiding office,—have the "Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion" over their subjects, and how "they that are great, exercise authority," but we put our brother to the proof, that the affairs, of the "Kingdom" which is "not of this world" are conducted after the manner of worldly wise governments. The Savior said, "But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant." Having now, as we presume, given sufficient attention to our brother's article, to at least indicate the main issues between us, and feeling desirous

to present as speedily as possible, our positive teaching, in reference to the great questions involved, we propose to show from the scriptures that,

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS A BODY FULLY ORGANIZED FOR ALL SPIRITUAL WORK, WITHOUT OFFICERS, IN THE SENSE, THE WORD IS EMPLOYED BY THE DENOMINATIONS OF THE AGE.

In the Jewish commonwealth, the Apostle informs us, there were "ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary." There was also, a "Tabernacle" into which, went the regularly constituted priests—the sons of Levi,—by virtue of God's ordination, "for accomplishing the appointed service." The priests—the selected few—were allowed to offer sacrifices for the whole people. This order of service alone, was recognized by the Father, for some fifteen hundred years, but in fulness of time, it ceased, and "a new and living way" was "consecrated by the blood" of our Lord Jesus Christ, called "The greater and more perfect tabernacle." When our Great "High Priest, over the house of God," entered into heaven, he has constituted the members of his church, his "Kings and priests," to offer acceptable sacrifices, on earth. Hence, the Apostle taught that the members of the great spiritual family, should, "with a true heart, and full assurance of faith—having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and bodies wasded with pure water—hold fast the profession of faith without wavering; and consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." [He. 10: 23.] From the birth day of the church at Jerusalem, we learn that, thousands of the new born sons and daughters of God, "continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers; praising God, and having favor with all the people." [Ac. 2: 42-47.]

In this first and model church, all true christian services, such as teaching, praying, breaking of bread, attending to the fellowship, and praises, were performed by the *whole* family. Not only so, but the church was the regularly organized missionary association, from which the gospel was to sound out to the ends of the world. From the "beginning," in 33, to the sending of the foreign contributions to the starving poor in Judea, in 43, no official investment or church office, can be found. When "the disciples

of Antioch sent relief unto the brethren in Judea," ten years after the church was planted, it is written, " they sent it, to the *elders*." [Ac. 11: 30] and this is claimed as the first discovery upon the vexed question, of " official elders."

Our scholarly and able brother, Doctor Lillie, most clearly shows, that the inspired laborers in the church through the Apostolic age, were not consecrated by human hands, and in fact, that officers, in the modern sense, were not known. When Paul said, " All the members have not the same *office*," [Ro. 12: 4] the sense is—not the same *work*, and we are more than satisfied, that the word *office*, can be scripturally predicated of no christian, but in the meaning, of *work*. So thought Ceorge Campbell, and so, in our judgment, thought Alexander Campbell, and yet, the scriptures alone, must decide the question.

" God set," placed, ordained, and consecrated.—" the members in the body as it pleased him." [1 Cor. 12: 18.] " The whole body was fitly joined together, and compacted," in order that the members might " grow up into Christ, in all things, and by the effectual working in the measure of every part according to ability, the body increased unto the edifyng of itself in love." [Eph. 4: 14-16.]

In the government of the physical universe, Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated that, each body—great and small—attracts influences and governs all others in exact proportion, to the amount of matter contained; and in the spiritual edifice, all are one, and each is a divinely consecrated priest, teacher, ruler over all others, in exact proportion to the spiritual power exhibited in the obedience of all. God ordained the labor in every department of the spiritual household. The more experienced members, were to teach, exhort, encourage, strengthen, confirm and watch over the new converts, while the latter, had their appropriate work assigned to them, and spiritual death was threatened upon all delinquents in the body.

The Apostles first directed, in placing the members in their appropriate working positions; the church planters after them, practically carried out, the inspired example, and were exhorted to " commit the things they had heard, to faithful men (not officers) who should be able to teach others also." Tim. 2: 2.]

The Corinthians were exhorted to " know" (recognize) the house of Stephanas—the first fruits of Achaia, who had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints."

"Submit yourselves to such," said Paul, "and to every one, that helpeth with us, and laboreth." [1. Cor. 16: 15, 16.] If Bro. Pendleton will closely examine "this passage, it occurs to us he will see more clearly the meaning of the quotation from Clement. Brother Lillie renders it, "They (the Apostles) appointed their *first fruits*, overseers and deacons"(servants) p. 20. "The trail of the serpent," (Rome) is even over this reading. Clement wrote that "the Apostles," as divinely instructed, "placed" the *first fruits*—senior members—"the overlookers" helpers, and chief laborers, in the vineyard of the Lord.

These scriptural quotations and brief statements, we have made, with the hope of indicating to Bro. P., and others, that our pleadings are not *new*, that, we are not "beating the air"—that we speak not without authority, and are not alone in our pleadings. We trust, if spared, to show that we are in perfect accord with the Apostles—with all the early christians, and with the profoundest Biblical scholars of the age. If we are deceived, we pray that our good Brother Pendleton, and other faithful brethren, may be able to expose every error. Truth alone, from whatever source it may come, can make us free. Dean Alford, one of England's ablest critics, says: "Being all priests (all christians) they require not, nor admit any distinct body of men, among themselves, especially called priests, nearer to God than themselves." Dean Peter said "Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility,"

THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

In our life-long experience, we can call to mind not a single successful effort in teaching, when the persons addressed were not inclined to search diligently the Scriptures, with reference to the matters spoken.

The people of Berea were said to be, "More noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." [Acts. 17: 11.]

When John Locke was asked, "How he came to know so much more than other men;" he replied, "When I did not understand, I was never ashamed to ask for information." The Apostles, solemnly exhorted Christians to, "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," and our first and last effort, in our attempt to lead our dying fellow creatures into the light, has been to induce them to examine for themselves the words of eternal life. We are happy also in, the reflection, that we remember no example of persons failing to discover the truth by reading, studying and comparing scripture with scripture for themselves.

In the past week, we were deeply mortified, in hearing of even preachers complaining, that they could not understand some of our writings and purposes. Why are we not understood? We certainly write not mysteries. When we tell our friends there is one, and only one family of God, and all the members of the spiritual, household, are brethren, we can not think, our conclusions need an interpreter. When we teach with Peter, that, the members of the church are "Lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," we think the words of the spirit are sufficiently plain. What is the difficulty, that the brethren do not seem to comprehend part of our teaching? The word of God is plain, and our aim is to teach nothing beyond what is written We apprehend the trouble with many good friends, arises from the fact that, speculations, and human devices, intervene in such a manner as to obscure in part, if not altogether, the sacred instructions. The Savior charged upon the Jewish leaders that, "They made void the word of God by their traditions."

In a discourse a few weeks since, in a neighboring city, we think we showed from the New testament, most plainly, that "God has set the members in the body as it hath pleased him"—that he has ordained the more experienced brethren, as overlookers of the household; the older and more discreet women, as teachers of the younger women, and "all are to be subject to one another," in carrying out the great purposes of the kingdom. We learned, however. that a very competent brother, in a meeting of the saints, after delivering a few appropriate words, by way of exhortation, remarked that, "If he was not the choice of the brethren, he would not speak again." Did not the Lord make it his duty to exhort the brethren? Why then ask if he should obey the spirit? It is true, common sense should be ex-

ercised by each as to the time, the circumstances and the manner in which exhortations should be delivered, but no brother should be relieved from the performance of any service enjoined. True, every thing should be done "decently and in order," but men who study and qualify themselves, to speak to the edification of the hearers, should not hesitate in the performance of duty.

It is a great error to suppose that, one, or, two, or a few of the best educated and most eloquent brethren, are called to perform all the public exercises, to the exclusion of others not so well informed. Even in the days of miracles, the Apostle exhorted the brethren to, "Seek that, they might excel, to the edifying of the church," and, "When they came together, every one had a psalm, a doctrine—lesson—a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation, but all things were to be done to the edifying of the body." [11 Cor. 14: 12, 26.] But one, in all instances, was to preside as judge, interpreter, and director of the services.

There can be no doubt, whatever, as to the privilege and duty of the members, old and young, Jews and Greeks, white and black, strong and weak, great and small, to exercise such gifts as each possesses for the building up the body and "sounding out the truth" to the world.

We presume, the brethren who have been taught to think, that no one save a learned preacher should, speak, pray or exhort in the congregation, can not well understand us, when we quote the scriptures to prove that, there is something for every member to do, and upon the co-operative labor of the members, according to the ability of each, the spiritual health of the body, and the success of the cause mainly depend.

But our chief object in calling attention to the subject of studying the scriptures, is to ask our readers prayerfully, and most earnestly, to examine our conclusions in the light of the Bible. We have evidence that, a few, and only a few, of our subscribers, are not interested in the HISTORIAN, and yet we think, we are safe in saying, not one who really reads, and studies the work, or searches the Scriptures with regard to the matters we have under examination, finds it in his heart to express dissatisfaction. We entertain not the slightest hope of success, with persons who will not carefully examine our pleadings. Dear readers, if we have studied the word of God to any profit, and understand our aims, we have in store rich treasures of practical thought, still to be brought to

light. We do not intend to intimate, that we have discovered any thing new. Very far from it. We only mean to say, the ways of God have been at least partially hidden, by the false ways of men, inaugurated by the great apostacy, and we trust that, we may contribute somewhat, to bring from beneath the rubbish of past ages, plain and old things clearly written in the Bible, in which the people of God, should take deep interest.

Criticise us severely, brethren, if we write not the truth, but by all means, study carefully what we say. "Which of you," in the words of the Savior, "convinceth us of sin? and if we tell you the truth, why do you not believe?" In very great kindness, we venture, to suggest, what we presume is the main ground of objection to a few of our conclusions. In our researches, we have entirely failed to discover the existence, of the Romish "*hierarchy*" in the chuch of Christ: or the English, "*prelacy*," and some of our friends seem, so much under the influence of, "*official grace*," and "*official*" administrations, in their religious exercises, that, when we speak of christian birth-right authority, for spiritual work, and of the church as, "A royal priesthood and peculiar people, to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light," they hesitate, stagger, and even complain that, they do not understand us.

Our highest aspiration, in the current volume, is to lay before our readers, "the doctrine of the Bible," regarding the church and all acceptable service to our Heavenly Father; and should we be mistaken in any conclusion, whether great or small, we would be most thankful for the "Aquillas and Priscillas" of the age, "to expound unto us the way of God more perfectly." Our brethren and friends, owe it to themselves, to the cause of truth, to God, and to the world, to thoroughly expose every false view. We pray our readers, most earnestly, to study the scriptures, and fear not when they discover truth, to disclose it on the house tops, and to the ends of the earth. We disclaim partiality for any "*peculiar views*," or *doctrine*—we entertain no theory on any subject; and we are ambitious only, to know and teach the truth of God, as it is written by the spirit.

We would be pleased to publish, any criticism, but we have decreed in our heart, that personal strifes, shall not defile our pages. Whatever is lovely and of good report, we would take pleasure in giving to our readers.

"SHOULD MEMBERS BE RECEIVED FROM THE SECTS WITHOUT BAPTISM?"

QUERY—BY W. T. ALEXANDER, ST. LEDGER, MO.

We presume that, no answer of universal application can be given to this inquiry. If persons have been baptized into Christ, they should not be baptized again. If they have "put on Christ" by baptism, it should not be repeated. If they have believed and been baptized, in order to be saved, nothing further is required as a condition of salvation.

If they have been buried with Christ in baptism, and desire to walk in newness of life, they need no other baptism.

If they have been baptized, *seeking* a good conscience, by the resurrection, the commandment has been fully obeyed.

If the party believed with all the heart, made confession that Jesus is the Savior, was been baptized to follow Christ, we presume, nothing more should be required in regard to baptism If, however, the persons were baptized, *in ignorance*, under the vague impression, that they were obeying John's baptism, as the twelve at Ephesus, or that, they were pardoned, saved and adopted into the "mystical" body, by "getting religion," or by the *direct* conversion of some strange spirit, and they were baptized to join the Baptist, Methodist or any other sect, they should by all means, upon an intelligent confession of their faith in Christ, be immersed into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in order to the remission of sins and adoption into the Church of Jesus Christ.

Each applicant, upon a full examination of the scriptures, should be his own judge, as to the adequacy of his baptism. No substitution, however, will answer in the place of the baptism, enjoined by the Savior.

REVELLINGS.

A brother wishes to know the meaning of the word "*revellings*," Gal. 5, 21.

The Greek, *κωμος*, occurs three times in the New Testament. In Ro. 13: 13, it is rendered, *rioting;* Gal. 4, 11, "*revellings*," and 1st Pet. 4: 3, *revellings*.

A "*revel*" in classic use, denotes a licentious feast, a wanton song; and some times it denotes the *dancing* used in revels. Frequently, it is applied to a lewd song to Bacchus. Any fleshly sport, particularly at worldly fets, is a revel. All promiscuous dances, plays, amongst the sexes, frolics, sports and feasts for fleshly (not social, intellectual or moral) gratification, partake more or less of the nature of revellings, "banqueting and the *abominable idolatries*," noticed by the Apostle.

BE PRUDENT.

It seems strange that such an admonition should ever be addressed to young girls. One would think that the pure womanly feeling, possessed by every one, would render it unnecessary. I regret to say, I know some, who have not had that careful culture at home, that renders them thoughtful of the present or future, and I wish to say a few words to them at the first of this new year.

Be prudent in your intercourse with gentlemen, and associate only with those, you believe are correct. So many, now forget they have souls. They give themselves up to dissipation and are not worthy of the love of good women. I have known girls who had the vanity to suppose they could cure a love of strong drink after they married the persons they preferred. They learned to their bitter regret that such a habit is too strongly rooted to be broken up so easily. If you can change the skin of the Ethiopian or the spots of the leopard, you can perhaps cure a love of strong drink. I knew some children who were certain, they could wash the first negro child they ever saw, and make it white. They had about as good sense as women do, who marry drunkards with the certainty they can cure them of their sinful habits. If a woman will marry a man she knows is in the constant habit of taking a dram, every day, she ought to bear patiently the misery he

may bring upon her. I was in the grave yard to day, when a hearse, with a splendid coffin, followed by a long train of carriages, drove up. "Killed by whisky," was the report given of him who was to be buried. If there is a sight that causes angels to weep, I think it must be, when men thus destroy themselves, deprive themselves of all hopes of happiness for millions, millions of years, for ages unending, eternal. What is it for? for a pleasant taste, a pleasant feeling, that turns to terrible suffering even here. If girls would set their faces against men who drink, they would save many souls as well as bodies. A christian woman, who marries an irreligious man has but little prospect of getting to heaven. There are trials and difficulties when persons help each other form religious character, but when neither party has help, it is hard to do right alone.

Be prudent with regard to falling in love. Few girls ever listen to the objections of their friends, no matter how well founded. I knew *one* of good sense and religious principle, who did believe her guardian's report of a young man, she was engaged to marry. He said to her. "Mr. O. is a dissipated man, you will be miserable if you marry him." She broke off her engagement and in about six months, Mr. O. died drunk. She had been captivated by beautiful letters and afterwards found out, they had been written for him.

A girl should most prudently guard her heart and never suffer her feelings to be interested in any man, young or old, unless she believes, he is correct in principle and life. I should think the misery approaching nearest to that of the unblest in eternity, must be that of a pure woman, married to a corrupt, wicked man.

THE TRUE WOMAN.

"The true woman," says a late writer, "need to be sought. She does not parade herself as show goods. She is not fashionable. Generally she is not rich. If you gain her love, your two thousand are a million. She'll not ask you for a carriage or a first-class house. She'll wear simple dresses, and turn them when necessary. She'll keep everything neat and nice in your sky-parlor, and give you such a welcome when you come home that you'll think your parlor higher than ever. She'll entertain your friends on a dollar, and astonish you with the new thought, how very little happiness depends on money. Now do not say any more, 'I can't afford to marry.' Go, find the true woman, and you can afford it. Throw away that cigar, burn up that switch cane, be sensible yourself, and seek your wife in a sensible way."—*Ex.*